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Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

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2014

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November 20, 2014 Minutes of URI Faculty Senate

1. The regular meeting of the Faculty Senate was called to order at 3:10 p.m. in the Cherry Auditorium, Chester Kirk Building, Chairperson Nassersharif presiding.

All members were present except Senators Cohen, Deng, Dunn, Euler, Hutchison, Kim, Krieger, Kusz, Licht, (N.) Mandel, Matthew, Maynard, Meagher, Rarick, Reyes, Taveira, Trubiano, Xiao, and Zozula; ex officio members Vice Presidents Dougan and Sonnenfeld, Vice Provost Libutti, CIO Bozylinsky, Deans Bonn, Corliss, Higgins, Larrat, McCarthy, Sullivan, Wright, and Zawia; and Mr. Zawatsky. Associate Dean Eaton represented Dean Brownell, Associate Dean Seitsinger represented Dean Ciccomascolo, and Associate Dean Veeger represented Dean Kirby.

Chairperson Nassersharif announced there was not a quorum at the time but proceeded to Announcements without any objections.

3. REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A. Announcements

- 1) Chairperson Nassersharif noted that a new standing committee, the Committee on Information Technologies, Infrastructure, Computing, Communications, and Networking had been approved at the October 16th Senate meeting. He said that nominations will come from the colleges for membership on the committee. He directed anyone with an interest in serving on this committee to contact his or her department chair and /or dean.
- 2) Chairperson Nassersharif announced that, at today's meeting, the FSEC will recommend changes to the Manual language describing the University College and General Education Committee and the Undergraduate Academic Advising Committee.
- 3) Chairperson Nassersharif announced that an informational forum on the health re-organization proposal had been held on November 18th. He said that the proposal will eventually be submitted to the Curricular Affairs Committee and, if approved there, will be submitted to the Faculty Senate for approval. He encouraged Senators to read the proposal. He said that one issue raised at the forum was faculty voting eligibility. He said that the FSEC was reviewing the Manual language, would forward an opinion to the all faculty and its implications could be discussed in a future Senate forum.
- 4) Chairperson Nassersharif said that, under New Business, he would introduce a discussion on the subject of improving shared governance at URI, an issue raised by the President in an effort to improve efficiency at the University and the ability to be more competitive. Communication, continuity, and efficiency are themes of the subject. The FSEC is planning to address continuity in the discussion later in the meeting.
- 5) Chairperson Nassersharif expressed his appreciation to Provost DeHayes for agreeing to sponsor the reception at the University Club after the meeting. He encouraged everyone to attend and noted that the reception gives Senators, ex officio members, and guests an opportunity to meet one another in an informal setting.

6) Chairperson Nassersharif asked everyone to remember to wait to be recognized by the chair before speaking. He noted that it would be very helpful for participants to identify themselves before they speak.

2. Chairperson Nassersharif announced that a quorum was present. He indicated that the Minutes of Faculty Senate Meeting #2, October 16, 2014 had been posted on the Faculty Senate website. He asked if there were any additions, corrections to or questions about these minutes. There were none. Chairperson Nassersharif ruled that in the absence of any changes or corrections, the minutes were approved.

B. Vice Chairperson Rollo Koster announced that the Minutes of the 2014–15 Executive Committee Meetings #14, #15, and #16 were available on the Faculty Senate website. She asked if there were any questions. There were none.

C. Vice Chairperson Rollo Koster moved approval of Senator Michael Sullivan as Chairperson of the Joint Classroom Steering Committee. The motion passed.

Vice Chairperson Rollo Koster moved approval of changes to By-Laws Sections 4.65 – 4.69 (University College and General Education Committee) and 4.30 – 4.33 (Undergraduate Academic Advising Committee). Discussion ensued about the need, given the proposed changes, for continued membership on the committee of the Dean of University College. A motion was made to amend section 4.66 by removing the explicit listing of the Dean of University College and replace with a representative from University College. The motion to amend was passed. A second motion was made to amend section 4.66 by removing the explicit listing of the Associate Dean of the College of Continuing Education from the committee composition, replace with implied representation from the College of Continuing Education, strike the word “undergraduate” and replace with the following statement:

4.66 The committee shall comprise four (4) representatives from the College of Arts and Sciences and one from each of the other colleges and schools of the University, one from the University Libraries; the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs or his/her designated representative, the Vice President for Student Affairs or his/her designated representative, and two representatives of the student body appointed by the Student Senate.

The motion to amend passed. The Chairperson said that the recommendation, as amended, would be returned on the December 11th Senate meeting agenda for a vote.

4. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

The President stated that the legislation forwarded to him after the October 16, 2014 Senate meeting had been approved.

The President expressed his gratitude for the support and approval of Question #4, the \$125 million bond for the new College of Engineering complex. He said that 63% of voters in the state and 38 of 39 cities and town in Rhode Island had approved the question. He noted that the state has supported a significant number of capital improvements at URI but none as large as the Engineering bond. The President will be hosting a celebratory party to thank the University and other supporters. The beginning stages of planning for the project are underway. Completion is estimated for 2019.

The President reported that the Council on Postsecondary Education had approved the FY16 budget for all three institutions of higher education in the state. The budget requests will be forwarded to the Board of Education and the Governor for approval. A small (less than 3%) tuition increase was approved for URI. Percentage tuition increases for Rhode Island College and the Community College of Rhode Island were greater, he said, because those institutions were disproportionately impacted by the tuition freeze. The President indicated that URI is well-positioned with regard to its pricing. He added that the FY16 budget included an expansion of tenure track faculty at URI, which had strong support from the Council.

5. REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

A. Dean Killingbeck was introduced and described the proposal process in the Graduate School: the Graduate Curriculum Committee approves and forwards proposals to the Graduate Council, which approves and forwards items to the Faculty Senate. He presented the Graduate Council Report No. 2014-15-1 to the Faculty Senate. He summarized the course change proposals and moved approval of new course proposals. The motion passed.

B. Professor English presented the Five Hundred and Eighteenth Report of the Curricular Affairs Committee. She said that Section I was informational and asked if there were any questions. There were none. Professor English said that Section II required confirmation by the Faculty Senate and moved approval of Item A, a new course from the College of Human Science and Services: EDC 280 Teacher Program Preparation and Career Development (1 cr.). The motion passed. She moved approval of Item B, two new courses from the College of Nursing: THN/NUR 426 Loss Across the Lifespan (3 crs.) and THN/NUR 429 Special Topics in Thanatology (1-3 crs.). The motion passed. Professor English moved approval of Item C, two new courses from University College, UCS 160 Success in HigherEd Learning Environments (1 cr.) and UCS 161 Success in HigherEd Learning Environments (1 cr.). Discussion ensued. A motion to table UCS 160 and UCS 161 was made, seconded, and approved by voice vote. Senator English moved to approve the curriculum change to the Minor in Thanatology. The motion passed.

C. Professor Hensley-Owens presented the Academic Standards and Calendar Committee Report 2014-15-1. She moved approval of changes to University Manual section 8.53.30 (to correct an oversight impacting graduate thesis credits) and approval of the Calendar for the Academic Year 2020-2021. The motion passed.

D. Professor Webb presented the Annual Report of the Council for Research. She said that the Council had been meeting monthly. She highlighted the activities of the Council:

- New Project Completion Grants competition, a new mini-grant initiated in Spring 2014 (\$20,000 distributed to 11 awardees)
- Efforts continue to improve the efficiency of Grants and Contracts processing
- Met with Ms. Winnie Nwangwu, the new Director of Sponsored Projects; she is working to enhance the flow of grants through her office
- Meeting with key people in the offices of Legal Counsel, Purchasing, Information Technology, Human Resources/Affirmative Action, to discuss the research mission from the point of view of faculty, and learn about the workflow through these offices as it affects research
- Improvements to the New Center application and Continuing Center approval process
- Revisions to the call for Nominations for Excellence

- Overhead Distribution Subcommittee, charged with evaluating expenditures of overhead funds and recommending changes in the percentage distribution, will complete its report for FY 2014 in December; after distribution to the community, it will be forwarded to the Vice President for Research and Economic Development and to the Provost.

Professor Webb said that two new centers are under consideration by the Council and will be discussed at their December meeting.

6. NEW BUSINESS

Chairperson Nassersharif introduced a discussion on the subject of improving shared governance at URI, a topic initiated by the President out of a desire to develop greater efficiency at the University. The Chairperson said that the President, Provost, and FSEC had met in a two-hour workshop in October and had discussed the topic. The FSEC has identified three areas of consideration: communication, continuity, and efficiency. Continuity on the Senate Executive Committee and expanding term length of leadership positions was discussed. Ideas to create two- or three-year terms spanning roles as Vice Chair, Chair, and past Chair were discussed. Senators responded with additional ideas for models and terms of service that would create an executive body with more consistent, ongoing experience. It was noted that past experience on the Executive Committee should be a requirement of serving as Chair. Chairperson Nassersharif said that extending the three-year limit of service on the Senate might be necessary if terms of Executive Committee leadership are expanded. Increasing compensation and course release time for service on the Executive Committee (all members) was discussed. Chairperson Nassersharif noted that the President, in earlier discussions, had suggested the possibility of hiring a visiting professor to cover teaching responsibilities. The President responded that he would give thought to enhancing the current arrangements in order that teaching and research obligations [of FSEC leadership] be maintained. Chairperson Nassersharif said that the FSEC would return with some proposals for restructuring the Executive Committee.

7. Chairperson Nassersharif asked if there were any Unfinished Business. There was none.

8. A motion was made to adjourn. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Neff